

## USING DATA TO ADDRESS THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

P-16 Council  
Agenda Item B-1  
September 9, 2003

---

### Presentation

Reducing the achievement gap among various demographic groups has emerged as a key policy issue facing educators. Recent state and federal legislation has targeted increasing opportunity for all students to achieve at high levels and holding schools, districts, and states publicly accountable for students' success. Kentucky Senate Bill 168 of 2002 requires reporting of student scores on statewide tests disaggregated by demographic categories, along with an equity analysis of this data. It mandates strategic planning at both state and local levels to eliminate achievement gaps. At the federal level, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ("*No Child Left Behind*") of 2001 links federal funding to demonstrated school improvement as measured, in part, by the degree to which achievement gaps are reduced. While closing the achievement gap is not mandated legislatively at the postsecondary level, several national publications, including *The Chronicle on Postsecondary Education* and *Black Issues in Higher Education*, annually monitor degree attainment and production with respect to African-Americans and other ethnic minorities. The Kentucky P-16 team attending the July NASH K-16 Summer Institute in Chicago this year (see agenda item A-1) recommended this issue as a priority for state and local P-16 councils.

The Education Trust is a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization whose mission is to promote high academic achievement by all students and to eliminate gaps in opportunity and achievement. Its focus is on low-income students and students of color. It collects student achievement data and links it with teaching practices, funding policies, and other contextual information to provide policy direction to increase student learning. Kati Haycock, executive director of the Education Trust, will present recent findings on what some schools and districts in Kentucky and across the nation are doing to provide all students what they need to succeed. She also will demonstrate how to use data to secure public commitment to policies that ensure that all students will reach high levels of academic achievement.